

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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CHRISTMAS BELLS.

Dear are the sounds of the Christmas chimes
In the land of the ivied towers,
And they welcome the dearest festival times
In this Western world of ours.
Bright on the holly and mistletoe bough
The English firelight falls,
And bright are the wreathed evergreens now
That gladden our own home walls.
And hark! the first sweet note that tells
The welcome of the Christmas bells.

They are ringing to-night through the Nor-
way firs
And across the Swedish fells,
And the Cuban palm-tree dreamily stirs
To the sound of those Christmas bells!
They ring where the Indian Ganges rolls
Its flood through the rice fields wide;
They swell the far hymns of the Laps and
Poles
To the praise of the Crucified.
Sweeter than tones of the ocean's shells
Mingle the chimes of the Christmas bells.

The years come not back that have circled
away

With the past of the Eastern land,
When He plucked the corn on the Sabbath
day

And healed the withered hand;
But the bells shall join in a joyous chime
For the One who walked the sea,
And ring again for the better time
Of the Christ that is to be:

Then ring! for the earth's best promise
dwells

In ye, O joyous prophet bells!

—*Our Dumb Animals.*

THE WAY, TRUTH, AND LIFE.

The influence of Jesus, the power of his
religious teaching, the inspiration of his life,
the far-reaching effect of his death and
resurrection,—all this seems to us to be in
accordance with spiritual laws of the soul
which are as natural in their operation and
effect as the law of gravitation, and as
human in their origin and purpose as a
mother's love or a patriot's self-sacrifice.
In the first chapter of the Bible it is stated
that "God created man in his own image,"
and in the eighth Psalm, that he is "made
but little lower than God, and crowned with
glory and honor." Then in the New Testa-
ment one writer says that we are "partakers
of the Divine Nature," and another, that
we are "the temple of the living God"; and
Jesus himself taught that it is possible for
us to become "perfect, even as the heavenly
Father is perfect." And this sublime esti-
mation of human nature finds expression in
modern literature as well as in the Bible.
Thus, for example, in "Hamlet" Shakespeare
speaks of man as noble in reason, infinite
in faculties, angelic in action, godlike in
apprehension, beautiful in character,—the
highest embodiment of earthly intelligence.

Now, to believe that the Man of Nazareth
not only possessed such qualities and char-
acteristics, but that they were manifested
in him in the highest degree; moreover, that
he discovered in his own personality and ex-
perience that such elements and attributes
constituted him the son of God, and was

able to impart this conviction to the common people about him so that they, likewise, felt that they were the sons and daughters of the same heavenly Father,—to teach this about the Master is to preach the gospel as the early Christians preached it, and to lift up Jesus before the world in such a way as to draw all men unto him in admiration and love and loyal allegiance.

We take Jesus as our Leader in the religious life, not on account of any supernatural quality in his nature, or any miraculous element in his work, but because he has proved himself, in a perfectly natural and human manner, to be worthy of our allegiance and following. In religion the whole world follows a few great teachers and leaders. Among these, for nearly two thousand years now, Jesus has occupied the highest place. And he holds this position to-day because the aspiring mind finds in his character and teaching the most uplifting inspiration, the highest ideals of truth and righteousness, the noblest motives for purity of heart and faithfulness to duty, the most potent influence in the development and progress of mankind. He is the supreme Leader in religious thought and activity because he brings into human consciousness the sense of the personal presence and love of the heavenly Father; because he inspires the mind with the conviction of our divine origin and immortal destiny; because he fills the common affairs of daily duty with divine meaning, bringing God down to man and lifting man up to God, uniting time and eternity and making one family of all human souls, both here below and in the world above.

Thus, beginning with the simple humanity of Jesus, seeing in him "the first-born among many brethren" in the household of God, we find him rising higher and higher in the esteem of truth-seekers and truth-lovers, until he has become the Leader and Inspirer of the best part of the civilized world. And, as such, we give him the homage of our hearts and the allegiance of our minds, to be led by him "into the religious liberty of the children of God," the perfect life of faith, hope, and love.

The great teacher once said, "I am come that ye may have life, and that ye may have it more abundantly." Let us learn of him who is "the way and the truth and the life" to all who yield to the influence of his spirit, how to drink at the same fountain of spiritual life at which his soul was nourished and inspired and strengthened. Let us keep our souls open to the inflowing currents of divine peace and power, truth and love, which

are forever flowing from the life of God into the life of all his sons and daughters who, like Jesus, have a pure heart, an open mind, a sweet temper, and a kind hand reached out in human love and helpfulness.

"All round about our feet shall shine
A light like that the wise men saw,
If we our willing hearts incline
To that sweet life which is the law.

"So shall we learn to understand
The simple faith of shepherds then,
And, kindly clasping hand in hand,
Sing 'Peace on earth, good will to men.'

"For they who to their childhood cling,
And keep their natures fresh as morn,
Once more shall hear the angels sing,
'To-day the Prince of Peace is born.'"

—Alexander T. Bowser.

CHRISTMAS EVE IN CHURCH.

I remember in particular a midnight mass which I attended one Christmas Eve in the church of an old Breton village, where we were spending the holidays. The sacred and storm-beaten edifice, when we entered it shortly before midnight, was filled to overflowing with kneeling and picturesquely arrayed peasants. On the right side of the altar a bower had been made of fragrant pine and fir branches, with great bunches of crimson-berried holly and waxy mistletoe glistening among the verdure. Under this canopy there sat on a low stool a young girl of great beauty, with her long black hair falling in silky masses on her loose white garments. In her arms she held an infant. Beside her stood a young man, wearing a gold-embroidered robe and leaning on a heavy staff, *while an ox, a donkey, and four sheep* were quietly munching corn from a couple of mangers.

The celebration of the mass began. A small chorister chanted the "Puer natus est nobis" ("For to us a child is born"). The deep bass voice of another grown-up chorister, hidden somewhere in the fir-branch bower above described, gave the response of "Ubi" ("Where")? A tenor chorister, concealed near the sheep added the word "Bethlehem," and then a baritone voice brayed "Eamus" ("Let us go thither"). Thereupon the priest, his acolytes, and the entire congregation formed into a procession, and marched to the fir-tree bower where the representation of the nativity had been arranged. The priest, having sprinkled both the mother and child as well as the animals with holy water, we all followed the kindly

old rector to the chief entrance of the church. The scene there was one which I shall never forget. All the cattle and flocks of the village had been driven into the old churchyard, and stood there crowded together in the silvery light of a full moon, around the open portal. Standing on the topmost step of the porch, with his acolytes and surpliced choristers around him, the venerable white-haired priest, who had had charge of the parish for close upon forty years, exclaimed, "God, in His mercy, my dear children, has sent me, on this radiant night of the nativity, to bless your cattle and your flocks, *because it is only right that the animals which constitute your greatest help and source of prosperity should participate in the joy which fills all our hearts.* Now lead your flocks past me.

The shepherds and cattle herders then began to drive the animals past us, while the rector, dipping the sprinkler into the silver ewer of holy water, showered the latter upon the oxen and the sheep, and amid the clang of the bells around their necks, their lowing and their ba'ing, as well as the words and cries of their drivers, ever and anon were heard the solemn words of the priest, "Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus, Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus," the choristers bringing the blessing to a close with a resounding "Amen." As I watched the animals vanishing one after the other into the night, it seemed to me as if I were carried back to the primitive times of the early Christians, and as if our matter-of-fact, prosaic, and materialistic nineteenth century was not a reality, but only a nightmare.—*New York Tribune.*

"Then I wondered if the promise made that night, '*Peace on earth, good will to men,*' held anything in store for this poor, dumb, intelligent creature; and I thought that *he was much worthier of consideration than some of human kind.*"—*The Buffalo World.*

THE STILL HOUR.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.—LUKE ii. 14.

"Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
Draw forth the cheerful day from night:
O Father, touch the east, and light
The light that shone when Hope was
born."
—*Tennyson.*

Christmas is a season of joy and happiness. The slaves of Pagan Rome made such cheer

as they might at this dead-winter season, cheating themselves, for a few days, with a sense of freedom, which was but a passing gleam of fancy and unrestraint. But for us a true Emancipator has come. Christ lights our feast-fire of the Nativity. We must have something of his gentle, filial spirit, something of the divine mind of his life, or the fire will not burn aright, the brightness will not come. Ought we not to make Christmas Day in a very especial sense Christ's Day, the day when we give him liberty over us, and see what his prompting to us really is? Hopefully let us light the Christmas fire with loving-kindness and joyful anticipation, for the year fades only that a better year may be. As we pile the wood upon the flames, what is there that we may cast along with it into the bright blaze that invites us to be glad? Doubts and fears and hesitations, mistrusts of ourselves and of each other, the narrow thought, the selfish care,—we may roll them on to the coals of the Christmas hearth, and rejoice to see them sputter their last and go. Burn, then, the yule log bravely: burn away the vexations, the grievances, the ills, the troubles of the dying year. Round the log let us gather our children about us and our friends: it is their day, because it is the day sacred to the birth of the child of God. It is the day which witnesses to the tender and humble origin of That Life which came into the world on an errand and mission of love, taught us what life is, and where its strength and greatness and beauty lie.

This is why we welcome the appearance of Christmas, why friends send to each other little presents as tokens of love; why a peace of God comes at this season to the overtaxed brain and hand of work, why we dress our churches with the evergreen boughs, symbols of a trust which no winter storm of disappointment can destroy. It is the festival of infancy and age, of poor and rich. It is merry Christmas and happy Christmas. It is the perpetual aurora, still preceding the coming day. Let us, therefore, with gratitude, contentment, and hope, keep the day that commemorates the birth of Jesus.—*The Christian Life.*

"Like him be true, like him be pure,
Like him be full of love;
Seek not thine own, and so secure
Thine own that is above.
And still, when Christmas-tide draws nigh,
Sing thou of Jesus' birth;
Glory be to God on high,
And peace to men on earth."

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

OFFERS.

1. "Black Beauty" is offered by Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

A LETTER.

2. Finding that an intelligent farmer and business man of this State had never heard of "The Farmer's Bulletin," it occurred to me that perhaps many persons whom your paper reaches are ignorant of the great amount of information given for the asking by our government. So I have taken the liberty of sending you a Bulletin, with a list of the circulars, for free distribution.

For these booklets address

The Secretary of Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

We give below some of the subjects treated in these leaflets.

FARMERS' BULLETINS.

The Feeding of Farm Animals.
Hog Cholera and Swine Plague.
Flax for Seed and Fibre in the United States.
Weeds and How to Kill Them.
Grape Diseases on the Pacific Coast.
Silos and Silage.
Peach-growing for Market.
Meats (Composition and Cooking).
Potato Culture.
Cotton Seed and its Products.
Facts about Milk.
Care of Milk on the Farm.
Commercial Fertilizers.
Insects affecting the Cotton Plant.
The Manuring of Cotton.
Standard Varieties of Chickens.
The Sugar Beet.
The Dairy Herd.
Bee Keeping.
Some Common Birds in their Relation to Agriculture.

[These are only a few of the leaflets mentioned to give an idea of the subjects treated. Perhaps the complete list would be sent on application. Please read with attention the following paragraph quoted from the first page of the Circular, revised to Sept. 1, 1908.]

"The Farmers' Bulletins and Circulars of Information issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture are printed in large editions and are for free distribution, the object being to supply farmers and others interested in agriculture and kindred subjects with condensed and practical information. It is expected, however, that applicants will ask for only such publications as are likely to be of special interest to them, and not with a view to getting complete sets, which might embrace many bulletins and circulars of no use to them, but which would be of great value to some one else. If applicants will bear this fact in mind, they will greatly aid the Department in its efforts to make the widest and at the same time the most useful distribution of its publications."

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. I wish to thank you all again for your kindness to me in the past. I have been ill the larger part of this year, the first six months of the year could not be out at all. I am better now, but not well. Have been to church once this year. I am going to try to have a Christmas tree again for the poor children of my neighborhood. They will expect it, and I do not like to disappoint children,—books, Christmas cards, pictures, magazines, illustrated papers,—anything that will please children. Please all help me that can. Will be so grateful for anything sent. The children in the country have so few pleasures. Mrs. J. Porter, R. F. D. 3, Doerun, Georgia, Colquitt County.

2. My husband has just begun a term of school in the country. We are both real young, and do not feel that we are willing to discontinue our education; but financial conditions and the care of a small baby prevent either of us from attending school. We should be very grateful to receive any good books which you might be able to send, and would also be glad of music, as my course of study is mostly on that line. If some one would please send me the *Ladies' Home Journal*, or any other good fashion

magazine, I would be very glad indeed. With many kind wishes for your little paper and each one of you, Mrs. D. H. Akin, Noble, Oklahoma.

Rev. C. F. Dykeman, Dakota, Minnesota, asks for "Transcendentalism in New England" and "Channing Lectures on Unitarianism."

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

TEACHING CHILDREN TO OBEY.

"There is one thing more," said Ellen. "Now that I have come back to live at home again, I shall wish to have you become a very excellent, good girl."

"Yes," said Annie, "I will." Then after a moment's pause she added, "but how shall I do it?"

"Why, the first thing is," said Ellen, "that you must always obey mother."

"Yes," said Annie, "I do. But Rodolphus does not obey her. He is very disobedient. I think Rodolphus is very disobedient indeed."

"But you do not always obey mother yourself," said Ellen. "She is sometimes obliged to speak to you a great many times before you obey her."

"Well, that is because she does not make me obey her," said Annie. "I should obey her if she would make me."

"What sort of a plan would it be," said Ellen, "for you to be my girl, and obey me?"

"Well," said Annie.

"And that makes me think," said Ellen, "of Aunt Randon's rules. They are in my trunk."

"I should like to be your girl very much indeed," said Annie, "and I will always obey you exactly."

"But the first command that I should give you," said Ellen, "would be that you should always obey mother."

By this time Ellen had opened her trunk, and, reaching down to the bottom of it, she took out a small, square picture frame, about as large in length and breadth as the palm of a man's hand.

The printing under this picture was as follows:—

THE FOUR RULES.

When you consent, consent cordially.

When you refuse, refuse finally.

Commend often: never scold.

"They are Aunt Randon's rules," said Ellen. "They show what I must do to take care of you, if you are going to be my girl."

"How?" said Annie. And so she began to read the rules over again, one by one, for Ellen to explain them.

"When you consent, consent cordially," said Annie, reading.

"That means," said Ellen, "that when you come to ask me to let you go anywhere or do anything, I must not answer hastily, but consider the objections first myself, and, if I think, on the whole, that I will let you go, I must say 'yes' willingly, without troubling you about the objections. For instance, if you ask me to let you go out and play some day when you are not very well, and I consider that on the whole I should be willing to let you go, I must not say: 'Why, Annie, I would not go if I were you. You are not well, and perhaps you might take cold; and, besides, it is not very pleasant. But still you may go, if you wish to go very much.'"

"What must you say, then?" said Annie.

"I must say, 'Yes, I think it will be safe; and you will have a very good time, I have no doubt. You must be dressed warm, and then I think there will be no danger.'"

"Yes," said Annie, "I would a great deal rather that you would say that."

So Annie went on to read the next rule as follows:—

"When you refuse, refuse finally."

"And what does that mean?" said she.

"It means," replied Ellen, "that, if, after thinking of the subject, I conclude that it is not best for you to go, and once say so, that must end the matter. You must not ask me any more to let you go; and if you do, I must not alter my decision."

Annie was silent. She hardly knew what to think of such a rule as this.

"How do you like that rule?" said Ellen.

"Pretty well," said Annie, "but not so well as the other."

Annie then proceeded to read the third rule.

"Commend often: never scold."

"That's a good rule," said Annie. "I don't like to be scolded. But what does commend mean?"

"It means praise—not exactly praise either. It means that, if you try to be a good girl, I must be pleased with you, and let you see that I am pleased."

"Yes," said Annie, "I think that is a good rule. They are all good rules, and it is a beautiful picture at the top of them."

So Annie brought down the frame and showed it to Phonny. Then she brought it to Beechnut, saying,—

"See, Beechnut, I am going to be Ellen's girl, and there are the rules that she is going to govern me by."

"Very good rules," said Beechnut, "only there is nothing said about punishment. There must be some punishment in a good government, and there ought to be some rule about that."

"No," said Annie, "I don't like to be punished."

"But there is no getting along without punishment," said Beechnut. "Besides," he added, "you will observe, whenever you have done anything wrong, you never feel really easy in mind about it until you have been punished for it. I will put in a rule about punishment. There is just room for it before the last line."

In the mean time, Beechnut took out the little wooden pins behind the picture, and thus freed the paper from the frame. Then he took a pen which Ellen brought him, and, seating himself at a table that was near, he printed in the fourth rule, in the blank space, between the second and third. There were then four rules, and they read as follows:—

When you consent, consent cordially.
When you refuse, refuse finally.
When you punish, punish good-naturedly.
Commend often: never scold.

"Now," said he, "we must decide what kind of punishment Annie's shall be. I think it will be best to put her in prison. Let us look about and find some place that will do for a prison for her."

So they all went to look about the room to find some place that would do for a prison. Annie was as much interested in this search as any of the party. Various places were proposed one after another, but there seemed to be some good reason against them all. Annie recommended the clock-case. There was just room for her to get inside, she said, and then besides she could have the pendulum to play with, while she was shut up in prison. The clock was out of order and did not go, but the weights and the pendulum were there, all in their places, though motionless—the weights at the sides, and the pendulum in the middle. Annie thought that this machinery might furnish her with some occupation in her imprisonment, but Beechnut and Ellen thought that the clock-case would not do.

At last they found a place under a shelf in a closet, which they thought would answer very well. Ellen found a little footstool, which she put in, in the corner, for Annie to sit upon.

"Now," said Beechnut, "the first time you disobey Ellen or your mother, you must come to this prison and stay there till you count twenty."

"I can't count twenty," said Annie.

"How many can you count?" said Beechnut.

"Ten," said Annie.

"Well, count ten twice, then," said Beechnut. "That will do just as well as counting twenty. And, if you wish for a pendulum in your prison, I can make you one. I can make it with your white stone."

So Beechnut took the white stone, and tied a string round it in a very secure manner, and then attached the other end of the string to a small nail, which he drove in on the under side of the shelf, opposite to the place where Annie was to sit. Annie was then told that, when she was sent to prison, she was to sit upon the footstool, and set the pendulum in motion, and then count the vibrations. When she had counted ten vibrations, she was to begin again, and count ten more; and that was to be the end of her punishment.

Beechnut then told Annie that, if she would always submit to her punishment like a good girl, and go to the prison whenever Ellen directed her to go, he would fit up her prison in a much more comfortable manner the next time he came.

"Prisons used to be miserable places, formerly," said Beechnut, "but they have made a great many improvements in modern times; and, if you are a good girl, and always submit to your punishment, I will fit up your prison with the modern improvements, the next time I come."

So Beechnut went away, and after he was gone Ellen and Annie went to work preparing to get supper. Annie was in hopes that she should do something wrong pretty soon, as she was in haste to try her prison.—*Jacob Abbott in "Ellen Linn."*

NATURAL HISTORY.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

(For the *Cheerful Letter*.)

Some years ago we passed a summer on a farm in Southern New Hampshire, and it was one of our pleasures there to spend the mornings in taking walks far off into the country. Our companion was a yellow Collie dog, Bettina Brentano by name. Her delight in these expeditions far outdid ours, much as we enjoyed them, and each day her ecstasy was renewed as if a walk was an unexpected and unusual treat.

When it was possible, we abandoned the highway for a wood path; and it was on one of these occasions that the small episode

occurred which I am about to relate. We struck into such a path one day and strolled, and sat, and strolled again, as one loves to do in the shade of great trees. We were walking slowly along when a hermit thrush began to sing not far away, and we agreed, in pantomime, to go nearer. We crept softly through the wood till we were directly under the great pine where the bird was singing, and we sank down upon the carpet of pine needles it had provided in order to listen in comfort, hoping fervently that our doggie would not take that moment to utter the sharp bark she loved to indulge in when trying to tell us how happy she was.

I found myself kneeling near and facing a low stonewall, and after a minute or two became conscious of a little figure, clad in a beautiful coat of yellow and warm brown—almost a counterpart of Bettina's—trotting gently up a path toward the wall. It was a young fox! I longed to call the attention of my companion, but could not on account of that other companion, who would have liked nothing better than a chase down the wood path. The fox did not perceive me at first, so I saw him quite at his ease, as he paused a little now and then, but not at all in alarm, for that was his world and he was alone in it. I had taken care not to move, hoping he would turn aside without seeing me; but suddenly he became aware of an alien presence, and I shall never forget the look of apprehension that came into those soft brown eyes. For a moment we looked at each other, the fox and I, and then he turned and trotted back as he had come, slowly at first as if he could not believe he was to be allowed to escape, and then, as immunity gave him added courage, faster and faster until he was lost in the distance. Meanwhile the unconscious Bettina lay at my side, quite satisfied that the flies at which she snapped comprised the whole of the morning's game.

A. B. S.

MACK, THE PARROT.

(For the *Cheerful Letter*.)

Mack has a lady friend for whom he has a decided liking. One warm summer afternoon the two were on the piazza, Mack in his cage, the lady almost under him, in a steamer-chair. Soon he called, in the sweetest tones,—

"Ethel!"

"What?"

"Do you like little Mackie?" The lady replied,—

"Yes: I love that little Mackie!"

"I don't doubt it!" said Mack, contentedly.

To a visitor I was repeating one of his bright sayings. Turning quickly to me, he said,—

"Don't tell that!"

Mack is so handsome and winsome that I cannot refrain from showering him with adjectives. For instance, I went in like this:—

"Mack, you are beautiful! You have such fine eyes, such pretty feet, such handsome wings."

His reply was:—

"I can't help it! Do you like it."

At times he sings as if he had heard, somewhere, a cathedral choir. He sings with great expression, phrases wonderfully; but, for words, we can only make out these:—

"Stop *prières*! [prayers]. The Lord is upstairs." And again he sings, "Lord, spare us!" with much which we do not understand; and, for that matter, neither does Mack.

Every morning he has sunflower and hemp seeds and a cup of fresh water. He always enjoys a frolic with me, as I try to set the water cup in its place. He is very good to push it out for me; but he is, also, just as ready to prevent my restoring it to its proper place. This is always done in a spirit of playfulness. One morning he gave it such a push with his beak that it threw the water over him, and, also, over the floor of his cage. My sister came to my relief, when he looked up at her, and said,—

"It came out!" adding, in an instant, "I knew it would."

Mack's friend, Ethel, had been expected for several hours. While waiting for her to come, he listened to every sound out of doors. Hearing a footstep on the piazza, he asked:—

"Is that Ethel? She'll say, 'Little boy have on a blanket?'"

Still she did not come.

"Where *is* Ethel?" he asked.

"Oh, she is still in Boston."

"She'll come!" was his cheerful reply.

When he is left alone with children, especially little boys, he makes himself one of them. It was a very cold morning when Earl and Lester R. came in and talked with him.

"O Mackie, it is so cold this morning!"

Mack rolled off a string of words in sympathy with his young friends. I did not stay to listen, but left the room for a moment. As I came back he still "had the floor," and was saying, with great complacency,—

"I have to have the fire and a cover," which was true.

A lady visitor was enjoying a slice of cake, when she exclaimed,—

"Oh, I ought to have given Mackie some."

"Oh, no," I said. "He does not like it."

"I do like it!" said Mack, with indignation. Then he turned to me, and gave me a little scolding. The only words that I could make out were:—

"Not like it! I do like it!"

But I think that he was stretching a point for politeness' sake.

Helen M. Knowlton.

HOW THE ST. BERNARD DOGS MANAGE NOW.

A French tourist relates that some time ago he set out to cross the St. Bernard Pass by himself, and got caught in the fog near the top.

He sat on a rock and waited for one of the dogs to come and attend to him, but in vain; and, when the fog cleared away, he managed to reach the Hospice. On arrival he observed that he thought the dog a rather overrated animal.

"There I was," he said, "for at least six hours, and not one came near me."

"But why," exclaimed one of the monks, "why did you not ring us up on the telephone?"

To the astonished tourist it was explained that the whole of the pass is provided with shelters at short distances from each other, all in direct telephonic communication with the hospice. When the bell rings, the monk sends off a dog loaded with bread and wine and other comforts. The dog on duty is told what number has rung, and he goes straight to that shelter. This system saves the dogs their old duty of patrolling the pass on the chance of a stray traveller being found, and, as the pass is for about eight months of the year under snow, this entailed hard and often fruitless labor.—*Baltimore Sun, in Our Dumb Animals.*

THE HOME OF SHAKESPEARE.

(Continued from last number.)

Shakespeare, there is good reason to believe, set precisely the right value alike upon renown in his own time and the homage of posterity. Though he went forth, as the stormy impulses of his nature drove him, into the great world of London, and there laid the firm hand of conquest upon the spoils of wealth and power, he came back at last to the peaceful home of his childhood; he strove to garner up the comforts and everlasting

treasures of love at his own hearthstone; he sought an enduring monument in the hearts of friends and companions; and so he won for his stately sepulchre the garland not alone of glory, but of affection. Through the tall eastern window of the chancel of Holy Trinity Church the morning sunshine, broken into many-colored light, streams in upon the grave of Shakespeare, and gilds his bust upon the wall above it. He lies close by the altar, and every circumstance of his place of burial is eloquent of his hold upon the affectionate esteem of his contemporaries, equally as a man, a Christian, and a famous poet. The line of graves beginning at the north wall of the chancel and extending across to the south seems devoted entirely to Shakespeare and his family, with but one exception. The pavement that covers them is of that blue-gray slate or freestone which in England is sometimes called black marble. In the first grave under the north wall rests Shakespeare's wife. The next is that of the poet himself, bearing the world-famed words of blessing and imprecation. Then comes the grave of Thomas Nashe, husband to Elizabeth Hall, the poet's grand-daughter. Next is that of Dr. John Hall, husband to his daughter Susanna, and close beside him rests Susanna herself. The gravestones are laid east and west, and all but one present inscriptions. That one is under the south wall, and possibly it covers the dust of Judith—Mrs. Thomas Quiney—the youngest daughter of Shakespeare, who, surviving her three children, and thus having no descendants, died in 1662. Upon the gravestone of Susanna an inscription has been intruded commemorative of Richard Watts, who is not, however, known to have had any relationship with either Shakespeare or his descendants. Shakespeare's father, who died in 1601, and his mother, Mary Arden, who died in 1608, were, it is thought, buried somewhere in this church. His infant sisters Joan, Margaret, and Anne, and his brother Richard, who died, aged thirty-one, in 1613, may also have been laid to rest in this place. Of the death and burial of his brother Gilbert there is no record. His sister Joan, the second,—Mrs. Hart,—would naturally have been placed with her relatives. His brother Edmund, dying in 1607, aged twenty-seven, is under the pavement of St. Saviour's Church in Southwark. The boy Hamnet, dying before his father had risen into much local eminence, rests, probably in an undistinguished grave in the churchyard. The family of Shakespeare seems to have been short-lived, and it was soon extinguished. He himself died at fifty-two. Judith's

children all perished young. Susanna bore but one child—Elizabeth—who became successively Mrs. Nashe and Lady Barnard, and she, dying in 1670, was buried at Abingdon, near Oxford. She left no children by either husband, and in her the race of Shakespeare became extinct. That of Anne Hathaway also has nearly disappeared, the last living descendant of the Hathaways being Mrs. Baker, the present occupant of Anne's cottage at Shottery. Thus, one by one, from the pleasant gardened town of Stratford, they went to take up their long abode in that old church, which was ancient even in their infancy, and which, watching through the centuries in its monastic solitude on the shore of Avon, has seen their lands and houses devastated by flood and fire, the places that knew them changed by the tooth of time, and almost all the associations of their lives obliterated by the improving hand of destruction.

One of the oldest and most interesting Shakespearean documents in existence is the narrative, by a traveller named Dowdall, of his observations in Warwickshire, and of his visit, on April 10, 1693, to Stratford Church. He describes therein the bust and the tombstone of Shakespeare, and he adds these remarkable words: "The clerk that showed me this church is above eighty years old. He says that not one, for fear of the curse above said, dare touch his gravestone, though his wife and daughter did earnestly desire to be laid in the same grave with him." Writers in modern days have been pleased to disparage that inscription and to conjecture that it was the work of a sexton and not of the poet, but no one denies that it has accomplished its purpose in preserving the sanctity of Shakespeare's rest. Its rugged strength, its simple pathos, its fitness, and its sincerity make it felt as unquestionably the utterance of Shakespeare himself, when it is read upon the slab that covers him. There the musing traveller full well conceives how dearly the poet must have loved the beautiful scenes of his birthplace, and with what intense longing he must have desired to sleep undisturbed in the most sacred spot in their bosom. He doubtless had some premonition of his approaching death. Three months before it came he drafted his will. A little later he attended to the marriage of his younger daughter. Within less than a month of his death he executed the will, and thus set his affairs in order. His handwriting in the three signatures to that paper conspicuously exhibits the uncertainty and lassitude of shattered nerves. He was probably quite worn out. Within the space,

at the utmost, of twenty-five years, he had written thirty-seven plays, one hundred and fifty-four sonnets, and two or more long poems; had passed through much and painful toil and through many sorrows; had made his fortune as author, actor, and manager; and had superintended, to excellent advantage, his property in London and his large estates in Stratford and its neighborhood.

If in those last days of fatigue and sentiment he wrote the epitaph that has ever since marked his grave, it would naturally have taken the plainest fashion of speech. Such, at all events, is its character; and no pilgrim to the poet's shrine could wish to see it changed:—

"Good frend for Iesvs sake forbear,
To digg the dvst enclosed heare;
Blest be ye man yt spares thes stones
And cvrst be he yt moves my bones."

It was once surmised that the poet's solicitude lest his bones might be disturbed in death grew out of his intention to take with him into the grave a confession that the works which now "follow him" were written by another hand. Persons have been found who actually believe that a man who was great enough to write "Hamlet" could be little enough to feel ashamed of it, and, accordingly, that Shakespeare was only hired to play at authorship as a screen for the actual author. It might not, perhaps, be strange that a desire for singularity, which is one of the worst literary fashions of this capricious age, should prompt to the rejection of the conclusive and overwhelming testimony to Shakespeare's genius which has been left by Shakespeare's contemporaries, and which shines out in all that is known of his life. It is strange that a doctrine should get itself asserted which is subversive of common reason and contradictory to every known law of the human mind. This conjectural confession of poetic imposture, of course, has never been exhumed. There came a time in the present century when, as they were making repairs in the chancel pavement of the Holy Trinity (the entire chancel was renovated in 1834), a rift was accidentally made in the Shakespeare vault. Through this, though not without misgiving, the sexton peeped in upon the poet's remains. He saw all that was there, and he saw nothing but a pile of dust.

The antique font from which the infant Shakespeare must have received the sacred water of Christian baptism is still preserved in this church. It was thrown aside and replaced by a new one about the middle of

the seventeenth century. Many years afterward it was found in the charnel-house. When that was destroyed, it was cast into the churchyard. In later times the parish clerk used it as trough to his pump. It passed then through the hands of several successive owners, till at last, in days that had learned to value the past and the associations connected with its illustrious names, it found its way back again to the sanctuary from which it had suffered such a rude expulsion. It is still a handsome stone, though somewhat soiled and marred.

On the north wall of the chancel, above his grave, and near to "the American window," is placed Shakespeare's monument. It is known to have been erected there within seven years after his death. It consists of a half-length effigy, placed beneath a fretted arch, with entablature and pedestal, between two Corinthian columns of black marble, gilded at base and top. Above the entablature appear the armorial bearings of Shakespeare,—a pointed spear on a bend sable and a silver falcon on a tasselled helmet supporting a spear. Over this heraldic emblem is a death's-head, and on each side of it sits a carved cherub, one holding a spade, the other an inverted torch. In front of the effigy is a cushion, upon which both hands rest, holding a scroll and a pen. Beneath is an inscription in Latin and English, supposed to have been furnished by the poet's son-in-law, Dr. Hall. The bust was cut by Gerard Johnson, a native of Amsterdam and by occupation a "tomb-maker." The material is a soft stone, and the work, when first set up, was painted in the colors of life. Its peculiarities indicate that it was copied from a mask of the features taken after death. Many persons believe that this mask has since been found, and busts of Shakespeare have been based upon it.

Stratford Church, probably more than seven centuries old, presents a mixture of architectural styles in which Saxon simplicity and Norman grace are beautifully mingled. Different parts of the structure were, doubtless, built at different times. It is fashioned in the customary crucial form, with a square tower, a six-sided spire, and a fretted battlement all around its roof. Its windows are Gothic. The approach to it is across an old churchyard thickly sown with graves, through a lovely green avenue of lime-trees, leading to a carved porch on its north side. This avenue of foliage is said to be the copy of one that existed there in Shakespeare's day, through which he must often have walked, and through which at last he was carried to his grave. Time itself has fallen

asleep in this ancient place. The low sob of the organ only deepens the awful sense of its silence and its dreamless repose. Beeches, yews, and elms grow in the churchyard, and many a low tomb and many a leaning stone are there in the shadow, gray with moss and mouldering with age. Birds have built their nests in many crevices in the time-worn tower, round which at sunset you may see them circle, with chirp of greeting or with call of anxious discontent. Near by flows the peaceful river, reflecting the gray spire in its dark, silent, shining waters. In the long and lonesome meadows beyond it the primroses stand in their golden banks among the clover, and the frilled and fluted bell of the cowslip, hiding its single drop of blood in its bosom, closes its petals as the night comes down.—*William Winter.*

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To her Brother, James Freeman Clarke.

NEWTON, February 24, 1840.

My dear James,—I received with pleasure the news you wrote me last, and think you have done wisely and well.

I saw Brother Osgood the other night and told him your determination and (*entre nous*) he exclaimed, "I wonder whether they will send for me." I think myself they could not do better. He might go for the summer perhaps; or, it may be, for entirely.

I am just reading Bettina's letters to Goethe. I have sent it for you, but it has never yet come. I have Mr. Emerson's copy, which is the only one here, I think; but I hope yours will come before Mr. Conant goes back, for you must have it. It would seem, on reading this book, that the best deed of Goethe must have been in developing (however little he had to do with it knowingly) such a mind, or, rather, soul. For her nature is that where heart and mind are one,—a living soul. There is just one person who reminds me of her, and that one is the lost L. I hope you will see it too, and wish I had not mentioned it.

They said here, with great assurance, that you were appointed president of the Missouri College and would not be dissuaded. Is it so? They suppose that you have gained the freedom of the company of the presidents by annihilating McMaster. I did subscribe, as you desired, to the *Biblical Repository* and to *Brownson*: have you not received them?

Tom is much confounded at your question. If you had asked some question on the nature or history of Electricity or Galvanism he

would not have been so much at fault, and even Chemistry has involved him pretty deeply. That big one in two volumes that you wot of is his pillow companion, and his electrical machine is now really elegant. The fashion is set in the neighborhood, and all the Brackett boys may be seen running to and fro armed with Leyden jars and discharging tongs. The only individual in our family who resists the progress of experimental science is our big dog Shark, who hates the sight of a jar and is seized with ague at the sight of the cylinder turning. Many a time have his dreams been invaded by an electrical concussion at his nose, and he has been compelled to a forced insulation and allowed no choice between positive and negative electricity. As for Tom, he has ground the machine so assiduously that the other night with a shout of surprise he announced to me that he really believed he was turning non-conductor himself. These things are apart from his school studies. I have a little book to send you which will show you that the other parts of his mind are beginning to unfold themselves.

I did not ask Brother Ripley to find you a church, for I do not choose that you should go a begging even in jest. Tell Anna that Mrs. Dr. Channing seems to be enamoured of her. She always and ever expatiates on her charms, as also do the Reverend Father and sweet daughter Mary, though not so much at length. Farewell, as ever,

SARAH.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, Canton Corner, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

INITIAL LETTER PUZZLE.

In the nine sentences below appear as many words (one word in each sentence) which, if found and written one below the other, their initials will spell the name of a festival.

1. Who is the chess champion? asked John.
2. The rain has put out the forest fires.
3. The horse ran away.
4. A stitch in time saves nine.

5. The wind was from the south.
6. The fire destroyed several fine trees.
7. The meeting was very noisy.
8. The ponds are very low.
9. Many a king's crown sets on a fool's head.

II.

HEROES AND HEROINES.

In what book do they figure?

1. Alan Breck.
2. Jo.
3. David, Duke of Rothsay.
4. Effie Deans.
5. Calvin Parks.
6. Hildegard Mar.

III.

SUGGESTIONS.

What famous persons do the following objects suggest?

1. A Muddy Cloak.
2. A Heel.
3. An Ax (2).
4. A Silver Cup.
5. A Wooden Horse.
6. A Lonely Island (2).
7. A Hut in the Woods.
8. An "Old Manse."

—*Youth's Companion.*

IV.

ADDITIONS.

1. Add one thousand to a lyric poem, and make manner.
2. Add one hundred to ancient, and make frigid.
3. Add five hundred to a part of the verb to be and make to challenge.
4. Add fifty to a wager, and make a girdle.
5. Add five to hasten and make a habitation for bees.

V.

HIDDEN CITIES.

1. He let it drop, a risk, indeed it was.
2. When I see a mob, I leave. Why? Oh, because.
3. Please pronounce "palanquin," "cygnet" and "Aye."
4. Sail on! Sail on! do not think of stopping yet.
5. Yes, that will be chic, a gown fashioned so.

Answers to puzzles in the November Number.

I. BURIED THANKSGIVING, DINNER.—1. Soup. 2. Oysters. 3. Turkeys. 4. Potato. 5. Corn. 6. Turnip. 7. Celery. 8. Macaroni. 9. Tomatoes. 10. Olives. 11. Pie. 12. Cheese. 13. Grapes. 14. Apples. 15. Pears. 16. Candy. 17. Raisins. 18. Ices. 19. Coffee.

II. BATTLES IN GREEK HISTORY.—1. Cynoscephalae. 2. Thermopylae. 3. Arbela. 4. Aegospotami. 5. Leuctra.

III. SOBRIQUETS.—1. Andrew Jackson. 2. William Henry Harrison. 3. Abraham Lincoln. 4. John G. Whittier. 5. John Quincy Adams.

IV. CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Bonaparte.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of an instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

Mrs. Alice Anderson, 231 Juliana St., Bedford, Pennsylvania, would be glad to receive *Our Dumb Animals* and other literature on humane subjects for distribution in schools.

N.B.—The editor hopes that all who are able will offer matter of this kind in the Book Club.

LIBRARY NOTICE.

The *Cheerful Letter* Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Mrs. Lily Blunt Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions to *The Cheerful Letter* should be sent to the secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Make checks payable to Lily Blunt Porter.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The address of the new chairman of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange is Miss Helen L. Bayley, 399 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.

Headquarters of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange are at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. The secretary, Mrs. L. B. Porter, may be found there on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

There will be a meeting of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange on Friday, December 4, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, at 10.30 A.M. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

Mrs. Blanche Hammill, 2525 X St., Sacramento, California, would like to receive copies of *Our Dumb Animals*, *Our Four-footed Friends*, and other humane literature.

THE HOME STUDY WORK of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange aims to help those who are without school advantages.

Lessons by correspondence will be given in any school subject to those who wish to continue their studies, but who are unable to attend school.

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THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the *Cheerful Letter* Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to Headquarters.

Chairman, Miss Helen L. Bayley, 399 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.

Editor of "The *Cheerful Letter*," Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Secretary, Mrs. Lily Blunt Porter, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.